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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/717,687 | 11/20/2003 | Hai H. Trieu | 4002-3111/PC817.00 | 9312 |

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11/22/2005

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EXAMINER

STEWART, ALVIN J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 11/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

TJH

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/717,687 | TRIEU ET AL. | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Alvin J. Stewart | 3738 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 November 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-58 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) See Continuation Sheet is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29-31 and 33-38 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 39, 40, 42, 44, 47 and 51 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 45, 48 and 54 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>03/25/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continuation of Disposition of Claims: Claims withdrawn from consideration are 4,6,8,11,12,14,15,18,20,23,25,27,28,32,41,43,46,49,50,52,53 and 55-58.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election of Species I and Sub-species A in the reply filed on September 14, 2005 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

The Applicant's representative believes that all the claims read on the elected Species and Sub-species, however, the Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's point of view. For example, claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25, 27, 28, 32, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50, 52, 53, and 55-58 read non-elected claims. The structure limitations on claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25, 27, 28, 32, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50, 52, 53 does not read on the elected Species (Figs. 1-5), neither the step of turning the implanting instrument by about 90 degrees, as shown in claim 55.

Claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25, 27, 28, 32, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50, 52, 53, and 55-58 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on September 14, 2005.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 39, 40, 42, 44, 47 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fraser et al US Patent 6,478,800 B1.

Fraser et al discloses a disc nucleus implant instrument (10) comprising a passageway (opening between plates 50A and 50B), a proximal end, a distal end, a dilator (52A and 52B) at the distal end, and an activator (46 & 48) having an inclined plane.

Claims 39, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by McKay US Pub. No. 2002/0173851 A1.

McKay discloses a disc nucleus implant instrument (61, see Figs. 13 & 14)) comprising a passageway (opening between plates 50A and 50B), a proximal end, a distal end, a dilator (the dilator has been interpreted by the Examiner, as the cylindrical tube used to deliver the implant 21. As shown in Figs. 7-9 and Figs. 13 and 14, the tube can be called a dilator because when inserted it capable of dilate the disc annulus) at the distal end, and an activator (the plunger).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16-17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29-31, and 33-38 are allowed.

Claims 45, 48 and 54 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin J. Stewart whose telephone number is 571-272-4760. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM-5:30PM(1 Friday B-week off).

Art Unit: 3738

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A. Stewart
ALVIN J. STEWART
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art Unit 3738

November 17, 2005.